

Inquiries of the Ministry

pate the debate this afternoon but it would be useful if the Secretary of State for External Affairs could give the House some information. Yesterday he said the Canadian government had not been consulted regarding the United States intervention in Cambodia. Since that time have any communications been received from the government of the United States setting forth the reasons for its action in respect of Cambodia?

Hon. Mitchell Sharp (Secretary of State for External Affairs): No, Mr. Speaker; the Canadian government was not consulted about the United States' step in moving its forces into Cambodia. So far as I know there have been no further communications. The President himself gave the reasons to the public in the speech he made yesterday.

May I also be permitted to answer the question put earlier by the right hon. member for Prince Albert. The International Control Commission was first asked to terminate its mission by the Royal Cambodian government through an oral request on October 7, 1969. The request was repeated in a formal note in early December when the ICC was asked to adjourn *sine die* by December 31, 1969, and all ICC personnel were withdrawn by the end of the first week of January, 1970.

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, when I asked the question originally I did so so that the record would be complete. I am glad the minister now has the information which was requested and has placed it before the House.

I should like to ask him this: When suggestions are made that Canada should be making representations to the United States while we ourselves are not taking any of the responsibility nor are expending our blood and treasure, does the minister not consider that such gratuitous advice from Canada to the United States is not in keeping with our responsibilities as a nation?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Cape Breton-East Richmond.

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton-East Richmond): Mr. Speaker, I have a further question for the minister. Has he or the government been in touch with their friends in Peking with respect to taking initiatives?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich on a supplementary.

[Mr. Douglas (Nanaimo-Cowichan-The Islands).]

Mr. MacInnis: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I think the minister should get up and tell us what initiatives they are taking with their friends in Peking.

Mr. Speaker: That is not my impression.

Mr. David Anderson (Esquimalt-Saanich): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the minister's reply to the right hon. member for Prince Albert, but can he inform the House whether or not the Cambodian government has protested to the International Control Commission for Viet Nam, the country from which these forces are moving across the Cambodian border, and whether he has knowledge of any communication that may have been received by the Viet Nam commission rather than the Cambodian commission?

Mr. Sharp: Mr. Speaker, as I said in the statement I made at the beginning, there have been many efforts by us to bring to the attention of the world the presence of North Vietnamese forces in Cambodia. It is because of the many frustrations we have experienced that we do not want to return if asked—and we have not yet been formally asked—unless we can carry on our responsibilities. I am sure this is a view which must be shared by all members of the House. We have been frustrated also in all our efforts, whether in Viet Nam, Laos or Cambodia, when the International Control Commission was in operation.

Mr. Anderson: A supplementary question—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I will allow the hon. member a supplementary but again I must point out that an emergency debate has been allowed on which I assume some hours will be spent today. I do not think the question period should be reserved or set aside for questions on that same matter. However, the hon. member will be allowed to ask his supplementary.

Mr. Anderson: I appreciate your generosity, Mr. Speaker. It is really to obtain information that I ask these questions, and perhaps it is easier now than it would be in the debate. I appreciate the frustration the Secretary of State for External Affairs referred to as I served for a short period of time as acting Canadian commissioner in Cambodia—

Mr. Speaker: Order. The hon. member is anticipating the debate. If he has a question he should put it now.